



RISE UP TO PROTECT ABORTION RIGHTS

Protests matter >>Page 20 Where now for pro-choice fight >>Page 17



STRIKES Workers are ready to fight low pay

New battles on horizon, and reports from frontline >>Page 3 and 18&19

Socialist Worker

£1 | No 2812 | 6 - 12 July 2022 | socialistworker.co.uk



COST OF LIVING

Prices soar as pay and benefits fall



TORY SCANDALS

Government is a cesspit



DEPORTATIONS

Tories want us to blame migrants

GET HIM OUT



MORE STRIKES & RESISTANCE CAN WIN

MIGRATION

A week when we saw the deadly cost of border controls

MIGRANT DEATHS across the world reached a horrifying level last week. In Texas, more than 50 people suffocated in a trailer.

In Melilla, north Africa, cops beat and crushed 37 migrants to death. And in Britain, the Home Office made plans for another attempt to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda.

>>Pages 10&11

SUDAN



Revolution must go on after coup leader retreats

SUDAN'S COUP leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has said the army will make way for a civilian government.

The announcement is a fraud, designed to halt growing opposition to military rule. Workers must renew their offensive

>>Page 8

WAR

Nato says West should be ready for nuclear war

NATO'S SUMMIT in Spain last week was a call to the West to prepare for yet more wars.

Political and military chiefs discussed ramping up the conflict in Ukraine, further threats to China—and preparing to fight wars against nuclear-armed “enemies”.

>>Page 6



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'If Putin were a woman... I really don't think he would have embarked on a crazy, macho war of invasion and violence in the way that he has. If you want a perfect example of toxic masculinity, it's what he's doing in Ukraine. You need more women in positions of power'

Boris Johnson....the feminist??

'Boris Johnson has been rumoured to be the one who likes assaulting women'

Diane Abbott suggests perhaps not

'Only change linen if essential... do not change inpatients' bed linen daily if at all possible'

Internal email circulated to workers last month at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust



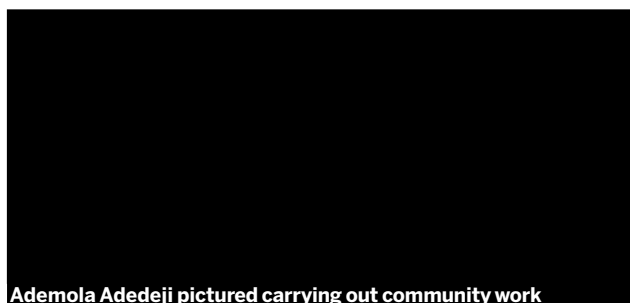
Conspiracy thought crime get young black men in jail

TEN YOUNG black men from the Manchester area have been jailed after being convicted of being part of a violent conspiracy.

But the convictions have caused deep anger with campaigners saying some of the teenagers were found "guilty by association".

Ademola Adedeji and three friends from Moston in north Manchester were each sentenced last week to eight years in prison for conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm.

They were jailed for taking part in a private group chat on the Telegram messaging app a few days after the murder of one of their friends. Kids of Colour,



Ademola Adedeji pictured carrying out community work

a youth justice organisation which organised a protest march, said the case showed evidence of "thought policing".

It said innocent young people had been criminalised for sending immature messages in the throes of grief.

Most of the ten young

men attended the same school in Moston. They were convicted of plotting violent revenge for the killing of their friend—a 16-year-old aspiring rapper called Alexander John Soyoye, who performed drill music under the name "MD".

None of those named as targets in the Telegram chat

were hurt. Sentencing them on Friday, the judge, Mr Justice Goose, said the case involved two rival gangs, the M40 from Moston and the RTD gang from Rochdale and Oldham.

The defendants denied being in a gang, insisting M40 was a drill music collective in which some of them rapped.

Four of the defendants had nothing to do with the M40 music group, beyond having watched one or two of their videos.

Roxy Legane, the director of Kids of Colour, said the case was the latest in a series of trials which had seen large groups of often black boys imprisoned for who they know.

A MET Police officer was sacked last week after an investigation found that she "turned a blind eye" to her husband's large amounts of stolen cash stashed in a shoebox.

Police searched the home of constable Inga Gherghel and found a police force body armour vest, which hadn't been issued to her, and a shoebox with more than £10,000 in cash inside a bedroom wardrobe.

Her husband Ioan Gherghel was responsible for the theft of large amounts of cash from members of an organised criminal network, the Met said.

A panel concluded that Gherghel willfully failed to enquire further into what the police vest and cash were doing in her flat.



SPENDING BY US companies on private jets for personal use by chief executives and chairs hit the highest level for a decade last year. It rose 35 percent to £28 million among the top 500 firms—the highest since 2012. Among the biggest spenders were Facebook parent Meta and aerospace group Lockheed Martin.

Meta spent £1.3 million on private jets for chief executive Mark Zuckerberg. Leasing group Jettly's chief executive Justin Crabbe said "it's quite difficult to go back to flying commercial" once a group has offered executives private flights.

Credit Suisse guilty of laundering drug money

CREDIT SUISSE has become the first domestic bank to be found guilty of a corporate crime by Swiss authorities. A court found the lender failed to stop the laundering of Bulgarian drug money.

An ex-Bulgarian tennis star, Elena Pampoulova-Bergomi, who was a former relationship manager at the bank, was also found guilty of money laundering offences.

The case centred on Credit Suisse's role in accepting millions of euros in deposits from a group of Bulgarian clients between 2004 and 2008. The Financial Times newspaper calmly comments, "Judges ruled that the



bank ignored obvious red flags—including huge sums of cash being brought in suitcases and two assassinations—that hinted at the possible criminal origins of the funds."

This included one client who was shot dead outside a restaurant in Sofia in 2005.

Pampoulova-Bergomi regularly collected suitcases of cash worth more than £500,000—not quite in prince Charles' league.

Cpt Tom charity probed

THE CHARITY linked to the late Captain Sir Tom Moore, a British war veteran who was lauded during the coronavirus pandemic, has featured before in Troublemaker.

Now the Charity Commission has announced it will investigate The Captain Tom Foundation.

The foundation was registered in June 2020 following Moore's initial fundraising efforts with the stated aim of "the advancement of public health and wellbeing".

But the watchdog raised concerns about links between The Captain Tom Foundation and Club Nook Limited. That's a company

controlled by Moore's daughter Hannah Ingram-Moore and her husband Colin Ingram-Moore.

The issues revolve around a "failure to consider intellectual property and trademark issues". They include the trademarking of variations of the name "Captain Tom" by the company controlled by the Ingram-Moores.

This could have generated "significant profit" for the company, the commission added.

In March 2022, the publication of the first annual accounts of the foundation showed it had incurred £240,000 in costs and given £160,000 to good causes.

Tory donors' gamble wins

THE billionaire Conservative party donors behind the gambling firm Betfred have paid themselves and their family a £50 million dividend. An increase in online gambling during the coronavirus pandemic offset the temporary closure of its 1,470 high street bookmakers.

Betfred's customers gambled £6.9 billion in the year to the end of September 2021, up from £6.4 billion. This netted winnings of £526 million for the company.

The company paid a dividend of £50.7 million to its shareholders, the Done family headed by the brothers Fred and Peter.

The 2020 results had been boosted by a £98 million rebate from HM Revenue and Customs.

A court found that the tax authority had overcharged the company VAT between 2005 and 2013 on its fixed-odds betting terminals.

The Done brothers have donated £375,000 to the Tory party since 2017, via their Rainy City Investments vehicle.

Queen nabs inflation busting bonus

THE QUEEN will receive an inflation-defying "bonus" of nearly £30 million from public funds over the next two years.

That's thanks to an obscure rule which means her income to fund the Royal Family's official duties cannot go down.

The Sovereign Grant, which covers the cost of items from royal staff salaries to travel as well as the refurbishment of Buckingham Palace, is currently set at £86.3 million.

It will now remain at that level until 2024 despite a substantial dip in profits at the Crown Estate.

That's the £16.5 billion royal property fund whose revenues are used to calculate the grant.

The existence of a so-called "golden ratchet" clause, inserted by former prime minister David Cameron's government, means the level of the grant cannot be reduced whatever the state of the economy.

The revelation coincided with the publication of separate figures showing that prince Charles saw his income from the Duchy of Cornwall rise by £2.6 million to £23 million.

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Workers ready to fight for above inflation pay

by NICK CLARK

NEW MAJOR workers' battles over pay are on the horizon, following the recent rail workers strikes.

Tens of thousands of telecoms workers in BT and Openreach could know this week whether they'll strike against a pay cut. And education union leaders have suggested strongly that they'll reject a pay offer from the government.

They're the latest signs that the battle between workers and their bosses over the cost of living is taking centre stage in British politics. And the move towards strikes is gathering pace.

CWU union members working in BT Group—BT, Openreach and EE—all voted overwhelmingly for strikes in three separate ballots that ended last week. The ballot in EE fell eight votes short of meeting the 50 per cent turnout threshold demanded by anti-union laws.

Outraged

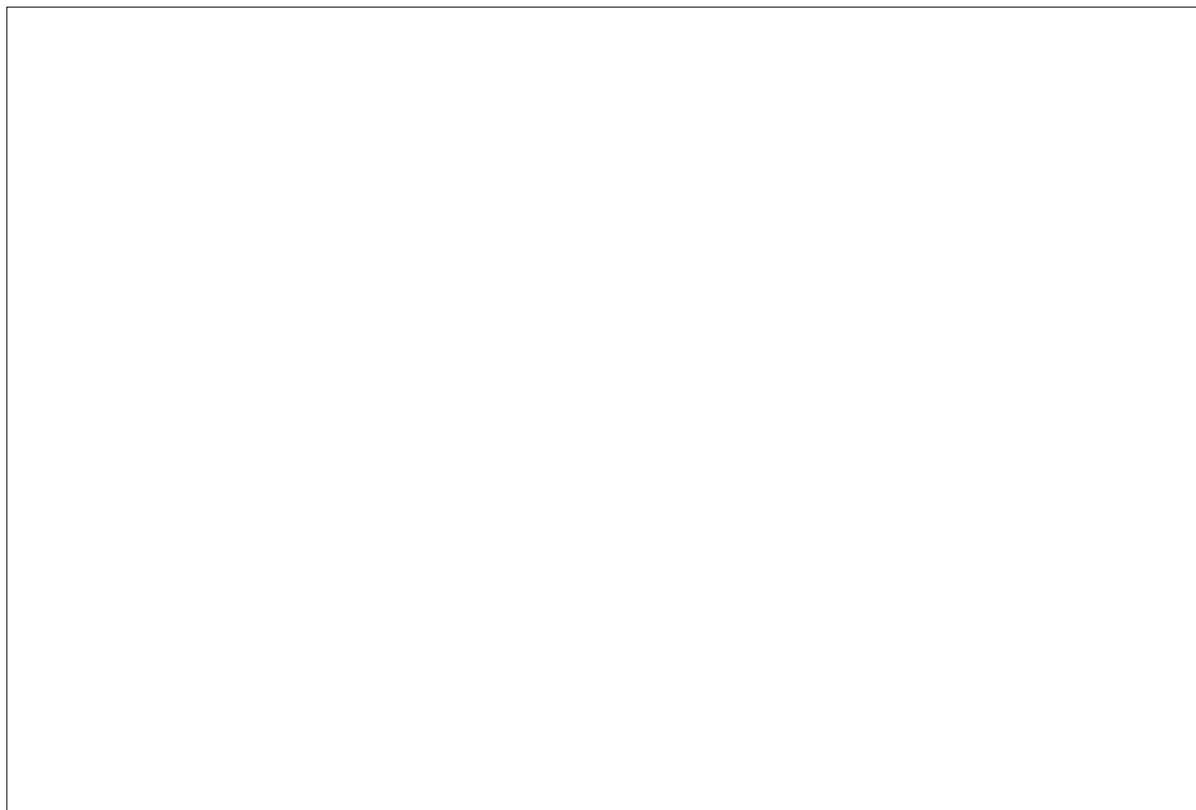
"People are outraged at the way they've been treated over the last couple of years," Eugene Caparros, a CWU rep in South Wales, told Socialist Worker. "The members are still angry at not being given a pay rise last year."

"Had the company given them one maybe they could have settled this—but they've always got their hands in our pockets."

Meanwhile, the leaders of the NEU education union hit out at reports that the government could offer teachers a below-inflation pay rise.

The Telegraph newspaper reported that Tory education secretary Nadhim Zahawi is planning to propose a 9 percent increase to starting salaries and 5 percent for most teachers.

But the NEU has already said it will



CWU MEMBERS marched on the TUC's 18 June demo. Are strikes next?

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

BACK STORY

Workers in the BT Group are angry

- Bosses imposed a pay increase of £1,500
- They did this without any agreement from the union
- For every worker it's a real terms pay cut
- Each result among the BT, Openreach and EE workers represents a readiness to fight
- The vote comes as workers in other industries are considering action over pay

ballot for action if he doesn't offer an above inflation increase.

The question now is whether union leaders follow through.

Eugene said that on BT's own online platform for its employees, workplace, workers had posted with the hashtag "10 percent and nothing less."

"That's what many people are saying," he said. "The union won't pick a figure because you can't negotiate if you have hard lines set down. But we do need something in line with inflation."

Yet CWU general secretary Dave Ward said union leaders would demand BT bosses give workers a "substantial pay rise"—though he

wouldn't say what that would mean. And he suggested the union may not call action if bosses were "willing to set aside the imposition of pay and come to the table with a significantly improved offer."

BT workers shouldn't accept a rubbish offer, even if it's agreed with the union rather than imposed.

Eugene said workers were already preparing for strikes. "We're going to have mass pickets across South Wales if action is called," he said.

What's your story?

Email with your ideas
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

Wobbly Labour support

THE PROSPECT of new pay fights is causing turmoil inside the Labour Party. The widespread anger over pay—and support for action—means even right wing, moderate MPs can't simply oppose strikes.

Labour's shadow foreign secretary David Lammy had to apologise last week after speaking out against possible strikes by British Airways check in staff at Heathrow airport.

He said earlier last month he wouldn't support strikes for a ten percent pay rise. But a few days later he said

he had "made a mistake" and "I apologise to all BA workers" as they actually want to reverse a 10 percent pay cut.

Labour mayor for Greater Manchester Andy Burnham took the opportunity to claim to support workers. In an interview on Sunday he said, "I support the rail workers, I support the BA staff."

But he was careful not to say he supported the strikes—and he followed Starmer in saying a Labour government would work to call strikes off for talks with bosses.

Andy Burnham

Don't lose rail strike energy

TALKS BETWEEN the RMT union and rail bosses resumed last week.

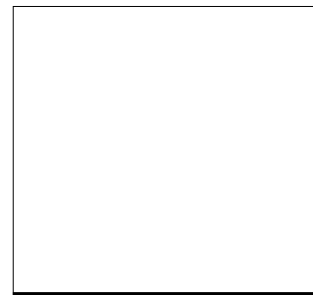
The negotiations followed three days of strikes that saw 40,000 workers at Network Rail and 13 train operating companies paralyse the rail network.

But despite overwhelming public support and a mood among workers to continue fighting, the RMT union had not announced any new strike dates by the beginning of this week.

Anti-union laws insist the RMT must give two weeks' notice of action.

That means there is a danger that momentum will be lost and the fight will become harder to win.

RMT senior assistant general secretary Eddie Dempsey said, "I think we've made a pretty



GOING FOR gold

emphatic point with the strike action we put on.

"We don't take these steps lightly. We're in no rush to run into the boardroom and name further action."

But naming, and implementing, strikes would put pressure on the talks.

What victory would look like is also contested within the union.

Some workers are calling for an above inflation pay rise and an end to the threat of all redundancies, whether voluntary or compulsory.

But union leaders have indicated their bottom line is no compulsory redundancies, and a 7 percent pay deal.

This leaves the door open for voluntary redundancies.

It also means that workers will take home a new deal that falls far short of the current 11.7 percent rate of inflation.

As RMT members attend the union's annual general meeting in Birmingham this week should push for more dates and longer action.

The Commonwealth Games in Birmingham from 28 July is just one example of events that could be hit by a shutdown.

Sam Ord

Socialist Worker

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Poverty in Tory Britain—debt for poor, bungs for the army

by SAMORD

THE COST of living crisis is sinking its claws deeper into working class people's bank accounts with new reports exposing the real difficulties they face.

Figures released by the Bank of England show that individuals are plunging themselves into debt, with £800 million borrowed in May.

Credit card loans rose 11.2 percent on the year in May—the month after energy prices soared and other forms of consumer credit rose by £400 million.

Many people's incomes aren't covering monthly essential costs and an increasing number of people are turning to high interest payday loans.

One in ten low income households—1.3 million—have already taken on credit in order to pay their bills according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Rachelle Earwaker, a senior economist at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation said, “£70,000 households are planning on doing that in the coming months.”

She added, “That gives you an indication of what is to come. We're now seeing some of the impact of high prices but a lot of that won't have kicked in yet, so I think it absolutely will get worse before it gets better.”

Trap

One payday loan provider, Amigo, offers a loan with a huge 49.9 percent annual interest rate.

Loan providers trap people in an ongoing cycle of debt but many people don't have a choice but to turn to them.

The Resolution Foundation think tank reports that real household disposable income growth averaged just 0.7 percent a year in the 15 years before the Covid pandemic. Between 1961 to 2005 it averaged 2.3 percent.

This reduction has hit those in rental accommodation, single parents and those with young children the hardest.

FIGURE IT OUT

95 percent—the increase in domestic gas prices between May 2021 and May 2022 according to a House of Commons briefing paper

54 percent—the increase in domestic electricity prices

12 billion pounds—the combined profits of energy producers Shell and BP in the first three months of this year

Now half of all children living with single parents are in relative poverty. The majority of the 1.8 million single parents are women.

Nearly 70 percent of single parents have experienced food insecurity with 20 percent using foodbanks.

Researchers blame decades of austerity and the lack of support given to single parents during the Covid pandemic.

Before 2008, lone parents were able to claim income support until their youngest child reached 16 or 19 but that age limit has been repeatedly cut.

But the Tory government has no interest in helping people who are struggling.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak announced a one-off payment of £650 to 8 million low income households. That's far short of what people need.

Meanwhile Boris Johnson's government last week promised to increase spending on the military by £55 billion over the next decade. His message to ordinary people is to accept poverty and dramatically falling living standards.

John Johnson's office says that it knew little about Pincher's behaviour. But former Downing Street top bod Dominic Cummings claims that Johnson called the Tamworth MP “Pincher by name, pincher by nature”.

Instead of investigating claims that Pincher was harassing other

FORMER DEPUTY chief whip Chris Pincher was in a position of power—despite harassment claims

Johnson's government is a safe place for harassers and abusers

ANOTHER DAY, another Tory crisis. Chris Pincher, a key ally of Boris Johnson, resigned as deputy chief whip last Thursday after allegations he groped two men in a club.

But it seems no-one who worked with him was particularly shocked. On Sunday, the group of parliamentary aides known as Conservative Staffers for Change said the revelations about Pincher “come as no surprise”.

“Having raised concerns about sexual misconduct with the chief whip, we were disappointed not only by how long it took to remove the whip from Pincher, but also at the continued lack of clarity about the PM's knowledge of his behaviour.”

Johnson's office says that it knew little about Pincher's behaviour. But former Downing Street top bod Dominic Cummings claims that Johnson called the Tamworth MP “Pincher by name, pincher by nature”.

Instead of investigating claims that Pincher was harassing other

MPs and Whitehall workers, Johnson promoted him in February to the office of deputy whip. In this role, Pincher was responsible for the discipline and welfare of Tory MPs.

Even work and pensions minister Therese Coffey, sent out on Sunday to support Johnson, was forced to admit Johnson knew about general concerns about Pincher's behaviour.

Five further allegations of misconduct emerged after Pincher's resignation.

Warned One Tory MP said they had warned senior Conservatives that “Pincher should not be anywhere near the whips' office”.

And another said, “I told a whip what I thought of Pincher, and that he had a terrible reputation with younger staff and MPs which had not gone away. That still stands.”

One Tory said, “There were persistent rumours about Chris and how he behaves when drunk, but there are persistent rumours

about most people in parliament and if you believed all of them we would have no MPs.”

Dozens of MPs are under investigation for sexual harassment. And those are the ones with formal processes unfolding. There will be many more, like Pincher, who operate out in the open but are not yet being investigated.

Yet despite the evidence tumbling out of Whitehall, Chris Pincher is still an MP.

It really speaks to the culture of how harassment and abuse is tolerated, partly because it is so widespread.

It is yet another example of how Boris Johnson's Tory party is a safe haven for abusers and harassers.

Far from being held to account, they are promoted to the highest offices in the organisation.

That's because Johnson is more worried about filling his administration with personal allies than protecting his colleagues.

Sarah Bates

SNP wants state to agree to a second referendum

by HECTOR SIERRA

SCOTTISH first minister Nicola Sturgeon last week set out a route to a second independence referendum that could break up the British state.

She named 19 October next year as the date for a vote—but there are very serious doubts about how this will happen.

Sturgeon declared, “Now is the time for independence.” But she added that respect for “the rule of law” will underpin the Scottish National Party's (SNP) approach to it.

She said wanted the Westminster government to grant permission for a referendum via a “Section 30 order”.

That's something that Tory governments have already refused on two previous occasions.

Sturgeon said, “I will not allow Scottish democracy to be a prisoner of Boris Johnson.”

She announced her wish to hold a fresh “consultative” vote—like the Brexit vote in 2016—asking the same question as the 2014 referendum on independence.

Immediately Sturgeon added that the Scottish government's power to hold such a referendum was contested. If the Scottish parliament tabled the bill, it

would almost certainly immediately be obstructed in the courts by the British government and through individual legal challenges.

To overcome this, Sturgeon explained she has asked Scotland's top judge to refer the bill to the Supreme Court.

Sturgeon conceded the Supreme Court might block the referendum.

If that happened, she said the SNP would fight the next general election on the single question of whether Scotland should become an independent country.

She said the election would be a “de facto referendum”.

Sturgeon added that if the British government blocked a referendum this would expose any notion of the UK as a voluntary union of nations.

The problem is the SNP's strategy continues to rely on the British state to eventually accept the

democratic case for independence.

Independence supporters that have organised on the ground or participated in marches don't have any role to play in this plan.

Support among working class people for independence in 2014 reflected a desire for a different kind of society and politics from years of war and austerity from Westminster governments.

A mass movement, on a bigger scale than what has been seen so far,—and independent from the SNP and its politics—could make a second referendum a reality.

This would mean breaking with nationalism and linking independence to the key issues affecting workers now.

The left should not allow Scottish politics to become dominated by waiting for a referendum while ordinary people are mere spectators.

Tories don't care about Covid

A NEW wave of Covid infections is sweeping Britain and threatening the NHS. But the Tories are determined that nothing should interrupt “business as usual”.

Covid cases rose by more than 30 percent last week with an estimated 2.3 million people thought to have had the disease in late June.

Yet the government refuses to issue the most basic advice—including asking for

mask wearing in busy areas and in hospitals.

That's despite Jenny Harris of the UK Health Security Agency last week saying that it looks like the current wave of infections is yet to peak. She said there could be a further upswing in hospital admissions.

Harris said that the new wave of Covid hospitalisations is “quite likely” to exceed the previous peak in Spring. Yet the Tories insist that we must live with the virus, and

that any decisions about public health protection are matters for individuals. That simply allows the spread to continue.

Covid could even combine with an expected early flu season this autumn to wreak more havoc in the health service.

But, in yet another sign of complacency, the government has no plan to get Covid booster jabs to the 20 percent of over-75s that have not yet had one.

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

CRISIS CONTINUES—BUT ONE SPARK COULD LEAD TO REVOLT

BRITAIN IS a tinderbox. Millions of people are struggling with rising bills, low benefits and wages, and fuel and food poverty. Any sustained fightback could set off explosive wider struggles.

There are lots of reasons to be angry at the Tories. Inflation at 11.7 percent hits people on benefits and the minimum wage hardest. But the pain goes much wider.

Petrol and diesel prices are going through the roof, even as the oil giants make obscene profits.

On 11 July 2008 Brent crude oil prices hit their highest ever level of \$147.02 a barrel. Petrol in Britain was 119.4p a litre.

On 29 June 2022 this year Brent crude was \$115.20 a barrel. Petrol was 191p a litre.

Last month we saw the rail strikes, a brilliant example of the best way to resist the Tories. This week groups of car and HGV drivers held “slow down” protests on British motorways to demand lower petrol and diesel prices.

In total 13 people were arrested across Devon and near the Prince of Wales bridge between England and Wales.

The Yellow Vest revolt in France that began in November 2018 was triggered by a rise in the price of fuel.

It was a battleground between right and left as to which direction it would go in.

It ended up as major challenge to the rule of president Emmanuel Macron. It was a spur to strikes led by rank and file workers and embraced a broad range of working class interests. It also clashed head-on with the cops.

The blockades we saw this week are not yet like that. But the mood for resistance in Britain today can also be drawn in different directions.

“The mood for resistance can be drawn in different directions

The task for trade unionists, campaigners and socialists is to build and strengthen collective, left wing focuses and not leave the stage to the right.

We want a militant movement against the social emergency of rising prices. It needs to be one that is anti-racist, demands radical action over climate change and directs its rage at the Tories and the bosses.

We need more strikes to follow the rail workers' action because they are the best way to defend living standards. But we also need them because they can be the beacon for everyone who wants to see action.

On the rail picket lines and the support rallies there was a sense of unity which could bring together people who are rightly bitter at how the system wrecks their lives. If strikes are held back or defeated then rotten right wing politics can emerge as an alternative.

This is an urgent moment to be the boldest in boosting the fightback, to break from routine, to back everyone who hits back, and argue hard for socialist change.

SEXIST TORIES ARE NO SURPRISE

PARLIAMENT IS a cesspit of sexual harassment—and it's no accident. Tory MPs walking the corridors of Westminster personify the system they serve.

The bigotry that soaks society flows from the top, and the way MPs act in the corridors of power can filter down to ordinary people.

Boris Johnson employed Chris Pincher as his deputy chief whip despite knowing Pincher had been formally investigated for inappropriate behaviour while a foreign office minister.

Two by-elections last month were the result of more Tory filth—child abuse and watching porn in the House of Commons.

David Warburton MP is under investigation over three allegations of sexual misconduct. Another Tory MP was arrested on suspicion of rape last month, and MP Rob Roberts is also under investigation for sexual harassment.

These are just the Tories we know about. Yet they still have the audacity to instruct us on how we should live.

They judge single mothers and attack Muslim women, and Johnson wants us to think that problems come from sharing same-sex spaces with trans women.

The real threat is the army of Tories who sexually assault, harass and bully and think their elevated status will protect them.

It's not new MPs—Tory or otherwise—that will stop parliament from being a den of decay. Instead it's ripping apart their entire system, which pumps sexism around every vein of society.

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For updates and analysis on the stories that matter go to socialistworker.co.uk/breakfastinred

socialistworker.co.uk

Our website brings together stories of struggles the mainstream won't report. It helps you find socialist meetings, protests and strikes—and the Marxist ideas and activism to change the world.

ROUND UP

ECUADOR

Mass struggles win concessions

PROTESTS HAVE been called off in Ecuador after the Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Conaie) organisation reached an agreement with the government.

Furious protests raged in the South American country over the rising cost of living for almost two weeks.

Roadblocks and mass protests brought the Ecuadorian government to its knees and halted oil production.

Last week right wing president Guillermo Lasso announced that there would be a 10 cent cut in the

price of gasoline and diesel.

A week on, the government has lowered the price by 15 cents.

It also agreed that indigenous communities will be consulted about new fossil fuel projects.

The protests showed that mass mobilisations can win concessions, but Conaie initially wanted fuel prices to fall by 30 to 35 cent.

Lasso narrowly escaped a vote to impeach him last week. More mobilisations could have won all the protesters' demands and removed Lasso.

SRI LANKA

Society on the brink

SRI LANKA'S economic crisis deepened dramatically this week after petrol supplies ran out and transport ground to a halt.

The government has effectively run out of hard currency needed to buy imports.

Energy ministers confirmed there would not likely be another fuel delivery until 22 July and that all schools would close indefinitely.

They also announced power cuts for at least three hours a day because the government cannot supply enough fuel to power stations.

There were clashes

outside petrol stations last week, with protesters blocking roads and demanding fuel—and troops opening fire to disperse them.

In the capital Colombo, the two-month protest movement to demand president Gotabaya Rajapaksa's resignation raged.

Sri Lankan society is standing on the brink while the vultures of the International Monetary Fund and international banks circle.

If they have their way, there will be a jobs massacre and subsidies for food, fuel and education will be slashed.

US

Cops kill black man

OHIO POLICE killed a 25-year-old black man last week by firing more than 60 times into his body—continuing even after he hit the ground. Jayland Walker died last Monday after fleeing police following a traffic stop.

Police body camera footage taken minutes after the initial stop shows a group of cops firing into him again and again. They then handcuff his lifeless body.

Ohio police now admit that Jayland had no weapons with him, and that a gun found in his car was unloaded.

A wave of anger at the killing has gripped Ohio, with a Black Lives Matter

held last Sunday.

Resident Monique said, "People from all races and backgrounds need to realise this is happening, and it just seems to be getting worse."

To confirm Monique's assessment, police fired rounds of tear gas at the demonstrators.

WARMONGERS BORIS Johnson and Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg at the Madrid summit

Nato meeting agrees escalation in Ukraine

THE BLOODSHED in the Ukrainian-Russian conflict shows no sign of letting up. The war's death toll continues to mount—for ordinary people in both Ukraine and Russia.

At least four people were killed after a Ukrainian missile blasted into residential buildings in the Russian city of Belgorod.

Early last Sunday morning dozens of buildings were hit in the city, which sits near the Ukrainian border.

Also on Sunday, Russian forces captured the entirety of the key Ukrainian region of Luhansk.

Ukraine's military withdrew from the city of Lysychansk—the last Ukrainian held city in the hotly disputed territory.

The victory for Russian president Vladimir Putin's army will likely mean they concentrate on taking control of the neighbouring Donetsk region.

Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky vowed to return to the region "thanks to the increase in the supply of modern weapons."

These come thanks to Nato. Ukraine's allies in Nato are investigating ways to entrench the war even deeper.

A meeting of Nato leaders last week in Madrid, Spain, further developed their commitment to opposing Russia

and strengthening their own power bloc.

Its leaders handed more arms to Zelensky, who spoke to the summit. This means a ramping up of the proxy war that US imperialism and Russian imperialism are waging over Ukraine.

Clause 22 in the Strategic Concept document agreed by the leaders ramped up the possibility of further, and potentially nuclear, war.

"We will individually and collectively deliver the full range of forces including for high-intensity, multi-domain warfighting against nuclear-armed peer-competitors," it said.

The warmongers' alliance laid out a "blue print" for a

"more competitive world" last Wednesday with the biggest military build-up since the end of the Cold War.

Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg boasted about "a fundamental shift to our deterrence and defence" in the new Strategic Concept.

"He promised "more forward deployed combat formations", "more high-readiness forces" and "more prepositioned equipment".

Equipment

President Joe Biden had already pledged that the US will pour military equipment into Europe. He will send air defence equipment to Italy and Germany and increase the

number of naval destroyers in Spain from four to six.

The new US deployments come on top of the 100,000 troops it has in Europe—which has already increased by 20,000 since the Russian invasion.

And, beyond just the US, its allies will increase the number of troops on high alert from 40,000 to 300,000.

As the US and Nato ramp up imperialist competition, it's all the more important to build an anti-war movement that rejects all the imperialists.

In Britain that means demanding Russian troops withdraw from Ukraine—and opposing the US and Nato escalation and expansion.

States fall further into two blocs

AT THE summit Nato leaders agreed that they will invite Finland and Sweden—until now officially neutral countries—to join the alliance.

This involved a filthy deal with the Turkish regime of Recep Tayyip Erdogan last Wednesday. In return for Turkey dropping its block on the two countries joining, it will clamp

down on Kurdish political exiles who've faced Turkish repression.

Finland and Sweden joining Nato is another sign of how the world is being forced into rival imperialist camps—with the US, and Nato leading the way.

They are armed with nuclear weapons and confront one another across eastern Europe and Asia. Supporters

of Nato paint it as a defensive and democratic alliance. The Strategic Concept talks of taking on Russia and China that "undercut the rules-based international order counter to our values and interests".

In reality, it's about US imperialism trying to defend its murderous hegemony in the face of competition from Russia and mainly China.

Marxism Festival— ‘We need to fight back’

by SOPHIE SQUIRE

AROUND 2,500 people gathered in east London last weekend for three days of socialist meetings, debates and events at the Marxism 2022 festival.

Many were enthused by the signs of revival in workers’ action in Britain, particularly the rail strikes.

But they also came to analyse and organise a response to racism, sexism, attacks on LGBT+ people, climate crisis and many other issues.

And throughout people discussed the need for revolutionary socialist transformation.

Edgar is a rail striker based at London Bridge station in south London. He told Socialist Worker, “With the cost of living people have had enough. It’s right for them to flex their rights and go out on strike.”

He called on people at the festival to “join a union”. “Attacks are coming strong and we need to fight back,” he added.

Spring

Chris, who attended the festival, told Socialist Worker, “The rail strike has put a spring in people’s step at Marxism.”

“We’ve had our wages frozen and dropped in real terms, but the money is still there.”

They said events like this are essential as class war is underway with, “Boris removing the bankers’ bonuses cap.”

Musrat works for a local government and is a member of the Unite Union. She joined the Socialist Workers Party at Marxism.

She told Socialist Worker that Marxism was the place to discuss what to do about rising racism and fascism.

“As a Muslim woman, I’m finding it very concerning about what is happening in places like France,” she said. “Of course this same hate is being repeated here. Boris Johnson spreads the same vile hate about Muslims.”

“I remember the 1970s. We can’t go back there. When you call out Islamophobia, you still can often feel uncomfortable.”

“Festivals like this are important. They make us feel like our voices

are heard and make us believe that people are powerful.”

Krystal said, “The meeting on Islamophobia was great. There was a debate with one particular person in the room who was playing into right wing ideas.

“But the way that people could come back to him was really impressive.

“They were able to make really important links between Islamophobia and sexism and break apart some of the racist myths about Muslims.

“Many people from around the world also shared how Islamophobia is on the rise in their countries. It was a great meeting to be in,” she added.

Isaac, a tourist, saw posters about Marxism and decided to attend the festival.

He told Socialist Worker that he would like to see similar events in the US, where he lives.

“I’ve been to things similar to Marxism in the US, but not entirely on the scale as this.

“What’s clear to me is that the US left is very fragmented. When something happens, like Roe v Wade being dismantled, there’s not always a unified response.

“I’ve got from Marxism that we need to build socialist organisation in the US.”

Those who attended the festival said they found it helpful to talk with others from across the globe.

First time attendee, Archie from Essex said the festival “has been great”. He enjoyed opening debates and hearing talks from international speakers.

“It’s given a real sense of international community with people here from across the world. We all are living in such shit times but events like this lift morale.”

Archie added, “It’s interesting to hear different views on Black liberation, trans rights and women’s liberation.

“It’s important to debate ideas on the left, Marxism Festival has been very open to this.”

The battle against racism in all its forms was a major theme at the conference.

Many of those who attended said they considered the festival an important place to go to discuss the future of the anti-racist struggle.



HUNDREDS APPLAUD rail strikers during the festival's opening rally

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

‘Workers have the power’—festival debates the way forward for the left

MARXISM FESTIVAL 2022 was joined by those from many different campaigns, with lots of climate activists attending.

Annie and Giovanna are members of Just Stop Oil and Insulate Britain who attended Marxism.

They told Socialist Worker they’d come to the festival to hear discussions about socialism and create stronger links between socialists and the climate movement.

“We knew there would be like-minded people here at Marxism,” they said. “We’re here to say that if the climate crisis continues, there won’t be any more Marxism Festivals.”

Giovanna added, “There are two reasons why I’m here.

“The first is that I’ve been seriously impressed by the Socialist Workers Party and the second is that I think it is the best place to deepen your commitment to ordinary people.”

Lina is originally from Peru. She told Socialist Worker that the kind of discussion she heard



Climate activists, Annie and Giovanna

at Marxism needed to happen across Latin America.

“I attended the ‘Why Cuba isn’t socialist’ meeting, and it really was great to hear a debate about what socialism is and isn’t.

“This is a debate you hear a lot in Peru and across Latin America.

“What came through for me in the meeting was that workers and workers alone have the power to make socialism.”

Those who attended the festival were clear that more action by workers was needed to

hit back against the rising cost of living.

Charlie is a Unite member who attended the Marxism Festival for the first time. He told Socialist Worker, “I think workers play a key role in the big events.

“The festival has allowed me to share that opinion with others who agree and give me advice.”

Charlie said being among other young workers and activists has been an “uplifting experience”.

SWP joint national secretary Amy Leather told the event’s closing rally, “We need to fight for strike votes in our own unions and fight to build worker solidarity, so no group of workers is left behind.”

She added, “Workers have the power to stop work, stop profits being made and bring society to a standstill.

“But they also have the power to build a different sort of society, where everyone is valued and can play a role.”

Read a report of the opening rally at bit.ly/M22opening



Keep up the revolt for victory in Sudan

by CHARLIE KIMBER

SUDAN'S COUP leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has said the army will make way for a civilian government. The announcement is a fraud, designed to halt growing opposition to military rule.

The present phase combines mass demonstrations and a return to the sit-ins that in 2019 caused a deep crisis for the regime at that time.

This is a big escalation from recent months. At the beginning of this week activists were defiantly holding sit-ins at Al Jawda in the capital Khartoum, Al Muassasa in Bahri close to Khartoum, in the city of Omdurman and in Darfur.

They are both a focus for protests, a sign that the regime's rule is contested and a gesture towards alternative ways of living.

They have, for example, "revolutionary theatre" and other cultural events as well as discussions and debates.

Transition

As the sit-ins grew, Burhan said the army would make way for a civilian government and would "not participate" in talks facilitated by the UN and regional governmental organisations. "The armed forces will not stand in the way" of democratic transition, Burhan said in a televised address.

He claimed the military is committed to working towards "elections in which the Sudanese people choose who will govern them".

Nobody should believe Burhan is about to fade away. This is playing for time and hoping to find a new excuse to outlaw street movements and strikes.

Crucially, Burhan said that a "supreme council of the armed forces" will be formed, combining the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces.

This is the infamous paramilitary unit commanded by Burhan's deputy, Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

Burhan is concentrating the coercive power of the state to intimidate and control whatever government form emerges now.

Many resistance committees

BACK STORY

The Sudanese people have fought bravely for eight months since general Abdel Fattah al-Burhan seized power on 25 October last year.

● The coup ended a supposed transition towards democracy.

● It also put an end to a fake "power-sharing deal" between the military and civilian leaders.

● The deal had been negotiated after a popular uprising deposed dictator Omar al-Bashir in 2019

have responded to the speech with scorn.

The Al-Kalakla committee on the outskirts of Khartoum said it was not up to Burhan to shape the process. Instead, it said, "it is about the gallows and the guillotines for the crimes you committed against the people".

The sit-ins follow mass demonstrations that swept Sudan on Thursday of last week. The ruthless authorities responded with their habitual repression.

Police and soldiers killed at least nine people on the day, most of them in the city of Omdurman.

Sudan's Radio Dabanga reported demonstrations in Nyala and Zalingei in Darfur, Kadugli in South Kordofan, El Gedaref and Kassala in eastern Sudan, and Dongola and Atbara in northern Sudan.

Thursday was a significant date because on 30 June 1989 Omar al-Bashir led a military coup and overthrew the elected government.

He ruled for nearly 30 years until 2019 when a mass movement drove him out, triggering an extended process of revolt and revolution.

It is also the third anniversary of one of the high points of the 2019 resistance.

Networks of resistance committees—local democratic structures that bring together activists and coordinate defiance of the military—organised the marches.

Protesters are demanding the overthrow of the regime, a civilian government and a democratic transformation.

THE MOVEMENT is back

Strikes can confront the state's repression

THOSE WHO are holding the sit-ins and who took to the streets last week have shown immense courage and determination. But those qualities alone will not defeat the ruthless regime.

The state may attempt to disperse the sit-ins with bloody repression. It is very important that protesters turn widespread talk about a general strike into action. That could cause a deep political crisis for the generals.

And if that happens, resistance committees have to become not just protest bodies, but the centre of an alternative government. That has to be linked to building strikes in the best-organised sections of workers.

There are debates among the resistance committees over core issues. The Revolutionary Charter for People's Power, adopted by resistance committees in 15 states, includes a roadmap to

form a government. This would start with the selection of local councils in a process that would start immediately as part of the resistance against the coup.

But it also restricts itself to a public-private economic system which would leave much of the

present wealth structure intact.

The revolution has to go deeper and organise to overthrow the regime, its economic backers and target its reactionary international supporters.

Sign and share a statement condemning the killings go to bit.ly/Mena0722

Protesters resist the police

The rich and the military have close ties

ONE REASON the military does not want to relinquish power is that they control large parts of the economy. A report this week from the Centre for Advanced Defence Studies (C4ADS) produced a database of 408 commercial entities controlled by security elites.

They include agricultural conglomerates, banks, and

medical import companies. C4ADS is headed by figures linked to the US military establishment.

It knows where the money flows in Sudan. The report said that the family of the infamously brutal Rapid Support Forces leader Mohamad Hamdan Dagalo controls over 28 percent of the shares in the major Khaleej

Bank. He also has many other holdings. Such figures emphasise that as well as pushing for political change, there has to be a complete transformation of Sudan's economic life.

Wealth and power has to be stripped from the military, its hangers-on and the rich. It has to be democratically controlled by workers and the poor.

Do better than Labour Party gloom

LABOUR LEADER Keir Starmer confirmed last week what most of us already expected.

He's ditching Labour's 2019 manifesto, along with most of the "ten pledges" he made during his leadership campaign to win the support of party members.

We sort of know what we can expect from Labour's next manifesto. More money for police and the military, handouts to businesses and precious little for the rest of us.

After all, this is a Labour Party that refuses to back above inflation pay rises for NHS workers.

Starmer's announcement was designed to show Labour is no longer the party of Jeremy Corbyn. "We're starting from scratch. The slate is wiped clean," he said.

As ever, it upset the few remaining socialists still inside the Labour Party. But I think we can do better than stamp our feet and pine for the years of 2019.

They were horrible. We were under constant siege from the right and—eventually—we lost.

Momentum decries Starmer's leadership and demands he supports strikes. But were there any of its placards on last month's TUC march?

If you're still in the Labour Party feeling like there's no hope, maybe you'd be better leaving. Throw yourself into the fights for today rather than remaining in Starmer's party of gloom.

Debie Bray
Carlisle



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Kurdish people sacrificed to clear way for Nato expansion

ANOTHER VICTIM of Nato expansion during the Ukraine war is the fate of the Kurdish people.

Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan dropped his objection to Finland and Sweden joining Nato last week in exchange for major concessions in his war against the Kurds. Erdogan wanted the two countries to cease all support to the YPG People's Protection Units on the border of Syria.

The YPG is linked to the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), which has been fighting a long war for Kurdish freedom against the Turkish state.

This tawdry deal is a big boost for Erdogan in his efforts to bolster his sliding domestic support in the run-up to

presidential elections next year.

"As Nato allies, Finland and Sweden commit to fully support Turkey against threats to its national security," said Nato's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg.

"This includes further amending their domestic legislation, cracking down on PKK activities and entering into an agreement with Turkey on extradition," he added. Sweden and Finland will now lift their arms sales ban on Turkey. They will share information with the notorious Turkish security forces on refugees who are accused of being YPG supporters, and back Turkey's war.

Swedish security service have a list of over ten PKK figures who may now be deported to Turkey.

Nato's blessing will encourage Erdogan's latest series of assaults.

The Turkish army has intensified shelling of civilian areas across northern and eastern Syria.

Erdogan is stepping up his war on the liberated Rojava zone and is trying to ethnically cleanse around 2.5 million people from the area. Turkish violations of human rights have always been powered by US and Nato-supplied weapons. Now there will be more armaments.

Those Kurdish voices who were silent when there was an alliance with the US should now reflect on the treachery of the imperialists of all types.

Tayyip
North London

We're ready to restart battle against fracking

ON HEARING the government is planning to give massive tax breaks to fracking companies, anti-fracking campaigners are ready to fight back.

Business secretary Kwasi Kwarteng wants to restart fracking and has asked the British Geological Survey to conduct a report on whether it can begin again.

But nothing has changed since the moratorium on fracking in 2019—when Lancashire was shaken by seismic events.

The frackers and the

government are trying to weaponise the invasion of Ukraine to say we need to go ahead with new projects. But fracking won't reduce the price of domestic gas.

And fracking projects take years to produce oil or gas.

The people of Lancashire remember what happened last time fracking projects were given the go-ahead.

So if fracking starts again, protesters will be out in bigger numbers than they've ever seen.

Nick Danby
Frack Free Lancashire

Don't be intimidated by the new laws

DESPITE OUR resistance, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts bill was fully enacted last week. And the Tories wasted no time flexing its powers.

The first target was the Stop Brexit Man who regularly sets up camp outside parliament and will now face prosecution.

It's not a protest that will change the lives of thousands. But Travellers, anti-racists or climate activists know they could be next.

I remember being on one of the first Kill the Bill demonstrations in



London. People were still reeling from Sarah Everard's murder by a police officer and the fundamental right to

protest was under attack. It was liberating to be out demanding change. Now we need to keep this up.

In truth it's scary that after this new law we could be arrested for simply being on the streets. But this is what the Tories want, and we can't let them have it.

I say we continue to shout as loud as possible. How else can we let our enemies know how much we utterly despise them, and fight for something better?

Liam Mayhew
North London

Just a thought...

Lammy and a fake U-turn

LABOUR'S shadow foreign secretary David Lammy last week did a U-turn on his opposition to strikes by British Airways workers.

But that's only because it's resistance to a previous 10 percent pay cut. And he hasn't withdrawn his comment that a "serious party of government does not join picket lines".

I've no time for such a party.

Margaret Farrell
Manchester

Let's start a new left party

BECAUSE OF Keir Starmer, I have not renewed my Labour Party membership.

Isn't it time to create a new proper socialist party? Why don't you do this?

Any Labour members who are not really socialist could then vote for the Liberal Democrats which would be better than a Tory government. And trade unions could then support your new party.

Mike Lawson
By e-mail

Justice for all the victims

GHISLAINE Maxwell deserves to spend time in jail for her participation in a sordid scheme with Jeffrey Epstein. Together they helped to sexually abuse and traffic underage girls.

But I also hope we will see more investigation into those who travelled in Epstein's private Boeing 727 called the "Lolita Express".

They included Bill Clinton, Donald Trump, Prince Andrew and Bill Gates.

Eileen Brierley
Bristol

Break anti-abortion law

IF EVER there was a time for law-breaking, it's now in the US over abortion.

Everyone who helps women to get a safe abortion whether it is legal or not will be doing the right thing.

People who assisted escape from slavery are now venerated. One day so will those who defy this attack on women.

Kim Williams
Edinburgh

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women.

We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We oppose discrimination against disabled people including those who experience mental distress.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests.

We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602

Socialist Workers Party meetings

The Socialist Workers Party continues to hold online meetings during the pandemic. This ensures that there can still be collective and safe discussion, organising and actions. Branches also hold in-person meetings with precautions taken for a safe environment.

Most of the meetings will be held using the Zoom system. Download the Zoom app onto your phone or computer and just before the time given for your local meeting ask to "Join a meeting".

You can then enter the number printed on this page for the appropriate meeting. **The password for all meetings is 967537.**

Make sure you look at the SWP Facebook page facebook.com/SocialistWorkersParty for news of national online meetings and other updates.

PATRIOTISM IN the football stadiums

Dear England?
Progressive patriotism
and nationalism in sport

BLACK COUNTRY, SHROPS & STAFFORD
Thu 14 July,
7.30pm
914-9548-1031

CAMBRIDGE
Thu 14 July, 7.30pm
Friends Meeting House,
12 Jesus Ln, CB5 8BA
681-800-4408

LONDON: WEST & NORTHWEST
Thu 14 July,
7.30pm
812-4911-6190

ABERDEEN
The US and China—imperialism and the shifting balance of power
Wed 13 July, 7pm
894-2628-7708

BIRMINGHAM
Islamophobia—the hate the state made
Wed 13 July, 7pm
Friends of the Earth,
The Warehouse,
54-57 Allison St, B5 5TH
281-634-5938

BRADFORD
Why the right are attacking net zero—can we get a sustainable economy?
Thu 14 July, 7pm
Bread + Roses,
14 North Parade,
BD1 3HT
885-9187-7552

BRIGHTON & HOVE
Rock Against Racism—when music helped beat the Nazis
Thu 14 July,
6.30pm
Friends Meeting House, Ship St,
BN1 1AF
818-391-0420

BRISTOL
Why we need a revolution
Wed 13 July,
7pm
Peoples Republic of Stokes Croft, 14 Hillgrove St,
BS2 8JT
688-397-3148

CARDIFF
More than a moment—what is the legacy of BLM?
Wed 13 July,
7.30pm
630-181-4857

CHESTERFIELD
Percy Bysshe Shelley—poet and revolutionary
Thu 14 July, 7pm
Assembly Rooms, 13/14
Chesterfield Rd, S40 1AR
828-532-8731

DEVON & CORNWALL
The rise of the far right in France
Thu 14 July, 7.30pm
865-2972-2883

DORSET
All you need to know about Marx
Thu 14 July, 7.30pm
849-4532-4141

EAST MIDLANDS
Tear down the borders—why we oppose all immigration controls
Wed 13 July, 7pm
868-9106-9359

EDINBURGH
Is a united Ireland inevitable?
Wed 13 July, 7.30pm
Southsider, 3-7
W Richmond St, EH8 9EF
868-9106-9359

GLASGOW
Two years after George Floyd—is #BLM more than a moment?
Wed 13 July, 7pm
Avant Garde, 34-44
King St, G1 5QT
879-2402-3259

HARLOW
Is Britain becoming a police state?
Thu 14 July, 7.30pm
832-8746-7480

HOME COUNTIES
Marxism, anarchism and syndicalism
Thu 14 July, 6.30 pm
8341-170-103

HUDDESFIELD
All you need to know about Marx
Wed 13 July, 6.30pm
Brian Jackson House, 2 New
North Parade, HD1 5JP
290-168-1804

KENT
Downing Street to Buckingham Palace—corruption in Britain
Thu 14 July, 7.30pm
434-623-8064

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE
US and China—imperialism and the shifting balance of power
Thu 14 July, 7pm
Friends Meeting House, 23
Meeting House Ln, LA1 1TX
992-204-9372

LEEDS
Tear down the borders—why we oppose all immigration controls
Thu 14 July, 7pm
The Swarthmore Education Centre, Yorkshire, 2-7
Woodhouse Square, LS3 1AD
881-4770-0676

LONDON: HACKNEY
After Roe v Wade—how do we defend abortion rights?
Thu 14 July,
7.30pm
Halkevi Community Centre,
31-33 Dalston Lane,
Hackney,
E8 3DF
854-8245-8715

LONDON: HARINGEY
Corruption at the top—Tories, royals and the police
Wed 13 July,
7.30pm
Kurdish Community Centre,
11 Portland Gardens,
Harringay Ladder,
N4 1HU
4593-881-576

LONDON: ISLINGTON
The politics of Pride
Thu 14 July,
7pm,
Elizabeth House,
2 Hurlock St,
N5 1ED
874-012-7970

LONDON: NEWHAM
Marxism and moral panic—resisting the war on trans people?
Thu 14 July, 7pm
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove,
E15 1HP
288-098-8827

LONDON: SOUTH
Marxism in 30 minutes
Wed 13 July, 7pm
Vida Walsh Centre,
2B Saltoun Rd,
SW2 1EP
497-196-1801

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST
From porn in Parliament to spiking—why does sexism run so deep?
Wed 13 July,
7.30pm
William Morris Community Centre,
6-8 Greenleaf Rd,
E17 6QQ
543-023-057

MANCHESTER
Is inflation out of control?
Wed 13 July, 7pm
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St,
M2 5NS

NEWCASTLE
System change not climate change
Thu 14 July, 7pm
Tyneside Irish Centre,
43 Gallowgate,
NE1 4SG
368-595-2712

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND
The US and China—imperialism and the shifting balance of power
Wed 13 July, 7pm
894-2628-7708

NORWICH
What did the Russian Revolution say about national freedom?
Wed 13 July, 7.30pm
Butterfly Café, 114A
King St, NR1 1QE
906-652-5299

OXFORD & THAMES VALLEY
From Amber Heard to Roe v Wade—sexism and the system
Wed 13 July, 7pm
861-2001-6477

PORTSMOUTH
Railway workers to barristers—are we entering a new era of strikes?
Wed 13 July, 7.30pm
Somerstown Community Centre, Winston Churchill Ave, PO5 4JJ
488-934-2809

SHEFFIELD AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Railway workers to barristers—are we entering a new era of strikes?
Thu 14 July, 7pm
Central United Reform Church, 60 Norfolk St, Sheffield, S1 2JB
528-174-9278

SOUTHAMPTON
Why the Tories are in crisis
Wed 13 July,
7.30pm
381-513-5080

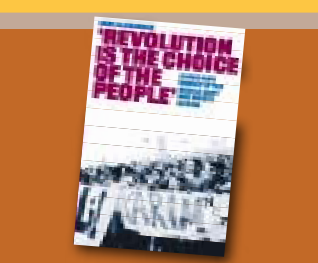
SWANSEA & WEST WALES
Why nuclear power is not the answer
Thu 14 July, 7pm
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Alban's Rd, Brynmill,
SA2 0BP
902-964-963

YORK & SCARBOROUGH
Capitalism and disability
Wed 13 July, 7.30pm
827-489-7492

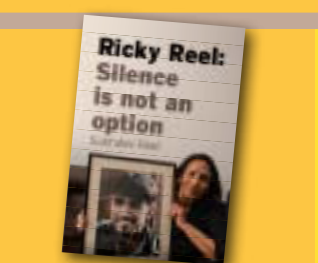
NEW FROM BOOKMARKS socialist bookshop



Socialism or extinction: the revolution in a time of ecological crisis
by Martin Empson £10



'Revolution is the choice of the people'
by Anne Alexander £12



Ricky Reel: silence is not an option
by Sukhdev Reel £10



Selected writings on socialism and liberation
by John Molyneux £15

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A clear expose of how profit threatens climate collapse

An important documentary that premiered at the Sheffield Doc Fest last month investigates the link between the banks and North Sea oil, writes **Josh Largent**

THE OIL Machine acts as a warning of a heating planet where oil and gas are entwined with government and finance.

The first scene forces us to acknowledge that oil as a commodity is everywhere. The film goes on to show the terrifying reality of North Sea oil taken from public control and sold to corporations.

The search for oil in the North Sea cost millions, even before anybody thought it likely to find oil there. The documentary goes on to explain how links between finance and oil keep society tied to fossil fuel use.

An expert describes North Sea oil as an “engine” driving forward Britain’s finance sector.

Increasingly large parts of the economy are reliant upon future North Sea profits. In 2000 30 percent of any given pension fund in Britain was directly invested in BP or Shell.

An economist explains there’s “3.5 degrees of heating locked into the London Stock Exchange” and “pensions savings and investments are invested in financing a future no one wants to see.”

The film features oil bosses, who shirk responsibility and fake concern.

Nonsense

But young activists, experts and scientists pick apart the nonsense. With some North Sea rigs extracting 1.7 million barrels a day one of them points out the impossibility of “decarbonising the oil and gas sector.”

The film explains in easily understood terms what fossil fuels are and the role they play in warming the planet.

Young people and children will feel the worst end of a heating planet. Some of those interviewed worry about food shortages and where people will be able to live.

Others suffer “eco-anxiety.” Experts explain in blatant terms the reality we face if action isn’t taken.

Shots of the ferocious ocean surrounding the rigs sit like a warning of what’s to come if the globe heats by 1.5 degrees, let alone 2 degrees or more.

The documentary also raises one of the most important questions that faces everyone today—the clash between business and the climate. As one young activist asks, “How could you know about such a massive issue and still worry more about profit?”

It’s a stark question—but one that also points to an answer. If the problem is a society that prioritises profit above all else, the answer is to fight for a new society.

The Oil Machine is set for theatrical release later this year



PLAYWRIGHT JOE Robinson, who helped produce the film, appears at London’s Royal Vauxhall Tavern

The story of Pride as told by Channel 4

TV

FREEDOM—50 YEARS OF PRIDE

Available now on All4

IN THIS feature-length documentary, Channel 4 looks back at the origins and development of a remarkable movement.

It features contributions from people with a close relationship to Pride from across the decades—including Olly Alexander, Bimini, Lady Phyll, Ian McKellen, Holly Johnson, Cat Burns, MNEK, Tom Robinson, and Lucia Blayke. And it weaves

interview testimony and archive material with a series of specially-shot performances at London’s Royal Vauxhall Tavern.

The film explores the battles fought and the shifts in attitudes that have characterised LGBT+ activism over the last half-century.

It explores the ways in which these changes have been influenced by and reflected at Pride.

And it tells some remarkable personal stories of courage, love, support, anger and determination that have defined 50 years of Pride in Britain. The danger is that Channel 4 gives

us a sanitised version of the movement, as told by the great and the good who feature heavily here.

There may not be such a focus on the criticism from the more radical end of the LGBT+ movement of where Pride today has ended up.

Channel 4 describes Pride as only “Part protest, part party, part performance.” In reality, Pride began with protest at its core.

But Channel 4 is at least right that “Pride has been and remains a vital, political, celebratory part of the ongoing battle for LGBT rights”.

FILM

RUBIKON

Available now on digital platforms

ALL THEY can do is watch as the world burns.

The emergence of an extinction event on Earth leaves the inhabitants of a space station in horror, as they witness the end of humanity unfold before their very eyes.

Does the crew risk their lives to get back home during the global catastrophe and search for survivors or remain safe and watch as life as they know it comes to an end?

The film begins with an intriguing—if somewhat



Viewing apocalypse from space

familiar—premise.

It’s the not too distant future—2056 in this case—and we’re just past environmental collapse. “Only the rich can afford to live in ‘air domes’ which filter the contaminated outside air.

“Big corporations have replaced governments and states. Conflicts over resources and territorial borders are resolved by their corporate armies.”

There’s a lot going on in the first minutes of



Tension on board

the film. Everyone on the station seems as if they’ve something to hide—but it does mean the plot—at least initially—isn’t so clear.

Some of the acting feels a little wooden too.

But the sight of a giant dust cloud engulfing the Earth from afar is still pretty evocative.

It’s a vision of apocalypse that’s both standbackish and manages to capture the enormity of it.

Nick Clark

Is polio re-emerging as a threat in Britain?

by YURI PRASAD

HOW WORRIED should we be about polio after scientists found the disease in London's sewage system last month?

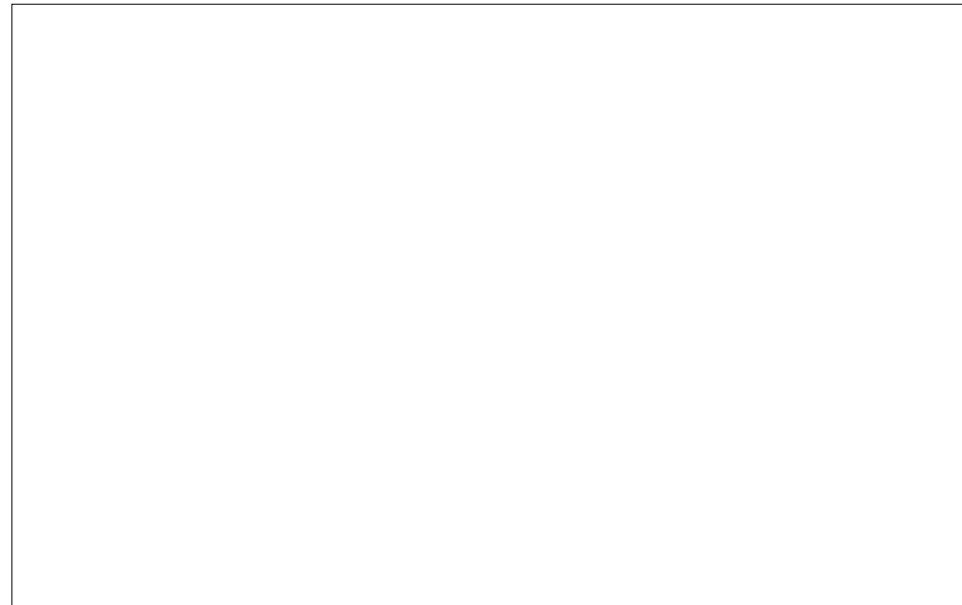
The Sun, along with many other right wing newspapers, thinks we should be very anxious.

"Polio is spreading in the UK for the first time in decades, officials claim" it hollered, while offering readers "six signs of polio you need to know".

Researchers have detected the poliovirus in the sewage system in east London on a number of occasions this year. Its original source is likely to be someone recently inoculated with an oral version of the polio vaccine.

This is used today mainly in countries where there are higher rates of polio circulation and where public health and hygiene infrastructure is weaker.

The oral polio vaccine works by passing a small quantity of a live poliovirus into our bodies and thereby teaching our immune system how to defeat it. We then



A CHILD in Cameroon in central Africa receives her dose of the oral polio vaccine

shed parts of the virus in our poo.

It is normal for small traces of the poliovirus to be found in sewage from time to time.

However, the virus has turned up regularly in east London in recent months, and several closely related versions of it are showing.

It is rare but possible for

the oral vaccine virus to revert to a virulent form that can cause disease. Changes to the virus found in sewage samples suggest the virus may be spreading among a few people in a catchment area of over 4 million people.

There is, however, no direct evidence of this so far.

With high levels of

immunisation in Britain—and vaccines being nearly 100 percent effective—any outbreak should be relatively easy to control.

For most adults polio is not a serious illness, even if they are unvaccinated.

Most people report few if any symptoms if they contract it.

But for children and those with weakened immune systems it is different. Polio for them can cause terrible damage, in severe cases it can cause paralysis.

The problem in London is not so much that there may be a limited amount of polio in circulation, but that vaccination rates in parts of the city have fallen to dangerously low levels.

In some areas they are below the 95 percent rate for two year olds that the World Health Organisation says is necessary to eradicate the disease.

It is particularly true of London, where fewer than half of 13 to 14 year olds received their booster vaccine last year. That's why health officials declared a "national incident".

Falling vaccination rates mirror almost every indicator of health service deterioration.

In 2012-13 the percentage of children vaccinated by their first or second birthday was easily above 95 percent but then followed a steady decline.

Retired GP Kambiz Boomla

told Socialist Worker, "The pressure on practices is to get to the low hanging fruit, the people that will readily respond to calls to get their children vaccinated."

"But what happens to those in harder to reach communities, and those that have come from situations which might make them more hesitant about vaccinations?"

Military

Kambiz says people who have come to Britain after experiencing Western military intervention can be difficult to convince.

"In east London we quite often hear people that have come from war-torn countries saying, 'We don't trust your bombs, so why should we trust your vaccines?'"

The virus is endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan—two countries that have been at the forefront of the West's "War on Terror".

If we are really to wipe out polio, then our government must direct huge resources towards public health in Britain and replace military intervention with healthcare for all.

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Protests and guerilla tactics —the fight for abortion rights

With Roe v Wade being torn down by the supreme court, Sarah Bates investigates how pro-choice activists are stepping up the fight

NOW the supreme court in the US has ripped up abortion rights, the fight is on to help desperate women end their pregnancies.

The pro-choice organisation, The Guttmacher Institute, found that some 2,548 abortions were provided every day in 2020—the last year figures were available.

So what happens to those women now? As well as protests against the decision itself, a host of guerilla struggles are taking place.

Many women will try to get their hands on what's known as "medication abortion".

Abortion pills, most commonly mifepristone and misoprostol, already account for 54 percent of abortions in the US.

Most states in the US allow abortion pills to be sent out in the mail, but 19 don't, as they require a health worker to be there.

Many US based telehealth services won't mail the pills to women in states with abortion bans.

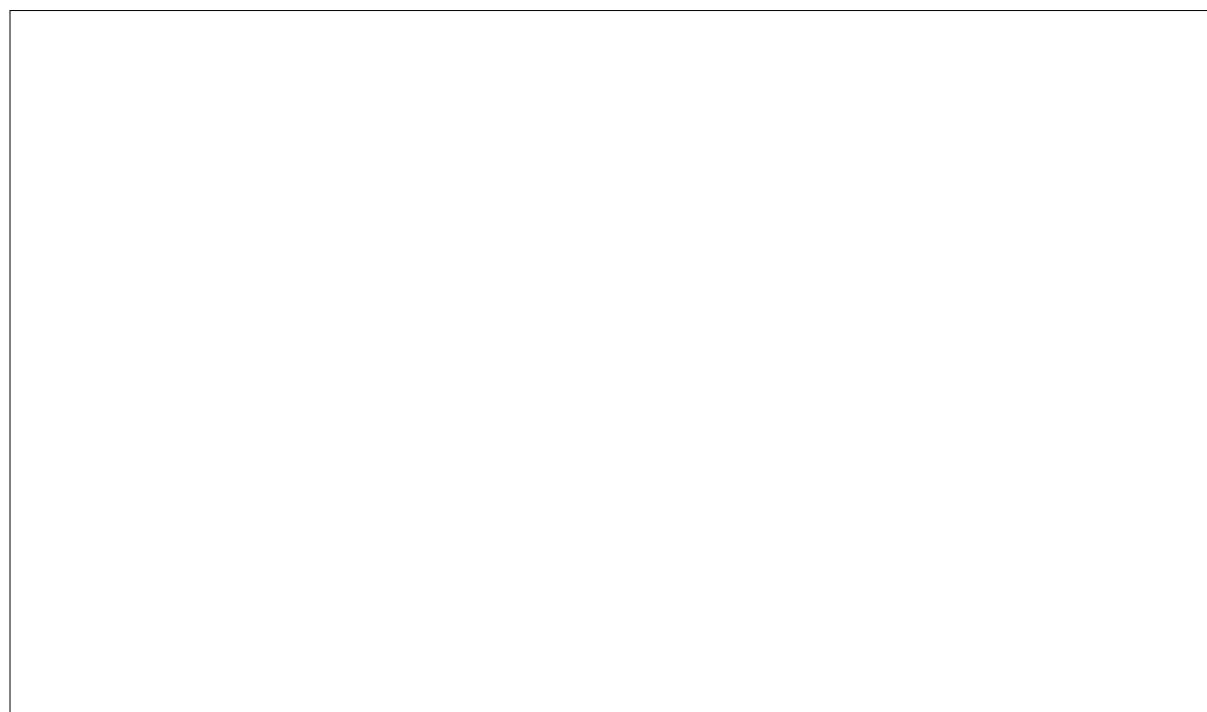
But some services beyond the US's legal jurisdiction can post medication to women throughout the states.

For instance, since website Aid Access was set up in 2018, it's shipped abortion pills to tens of thousands of people from its pharmacy in India.

Activists in Mexico have long helped women from the US with abortions—and now they are expecting to redouble their efforts.

They've been transporting pills over the border in toys, jars of vitamins or sewn into the hems of clothes.

For poor women, one of the biggest barriers to abortion access is who will pay for the procedure and associated costs such as travel, accommodation



ABORTION-RIGHTS ACTIVISTS crossing the Brooklyn Bridge in New York after the US supreme court announced the ending of Roe v Wade

and childcare expenses.

Dozens of abortion funds operate like charities to help women pay off these bills.

In the "trigger ban" states, some are still operating to help women travel further afield to get the care they need.

Fearing

Others shut up shop abruptly, fearing legal repercussions if they were to continue to operate.

Although expected for a long time, the Supreme Court's ruling on 24 June was instant. So women

who were due to receive abortions were turned away from clinic doors. It plunged health workers into a desperate scramble to find options to get women the care they need.

A group called Elevated Access has chartered volunteer-piloted light aircraft to transport women to abortion appointments, sometimes from small rural airstrips.

The Just The Pill organisation has bought two vans—one for medication abortions and one for surgical procedures.

"We are undaunted," said Dr Julie Amaon, director of Just The Pill.

"By moving beyond a traditional brick and mortar clinic, our mobile clinics can quickly adapt to the courts, state legislatures, and the markets, going where the need is greatest.

Some are trying legal routes to keep their doors open and keep women out of the backstreets. Mississippi's only abortion clinic is trying to stop a state law that will make most abortions illegal on 7 July.

"We're not giving up," said Diane Derzis, clinic owner. "Women have always had abortions, no matter what it took."

More massive protest needed

ALTHOUGH the anti-choice bigots are on the offensive, there is a mood to fight back for abortion rights.

Big and angry mobilisations gathered just hours after the Roe announcement.

Some 20,000 people marched in New York, with many thousands taking to the streets in Portland, Oregon, Los Angeles, California, and countless other cities. There were angry protests in states with some of the most restrictive laws.

For instance, thousands of people gathered in Salt Lake City, Utah, where the state government wants a near ban on a woman's right to choose.

The visceral rage of working class people comes as a counterweight to the inaction and timidity of the NGOs and organised labour movement.

Planned Parenthood said, "The #1 thing you can do right now is help protect abortion access at state level."

That can lead people down the dead end of focusing on elections.

This is also partly why protests aren't bigger currently. The reliance on elections and the courts often leads people to believe their rights will be protected if they vote for the right people.

The battle over abortion rights has to encompass more than just who controls the state legislature.

It's important to fight for legal gains.

But the best way to do that is to build a large enough movement, with workers at the heart of it, that makes it impossible for the state machine to deny those demands.

Hundreds more protests are now planned, many under the "We won't go back" slogan.

They are crucial to the resistance.

Democrats encourage passivity as abortion becomes illegal

THE SUPREME Court made the decisive blow, but blame still lies with the Democrats.

When Roe v Wade was struck down, president Joe Biden offered lukewarm words of objection. Yet he has refused to act in defence of abortion rights.

There are measures the White House could put in place to ease abortion access for women dramatically.

Biden could pass laws to open government-funded clinics along state borders. He could ensure that

telemedicine and abortion pills would be readily available to women, no matter what state they're in. And he could give clinics permission to open on federal lands.

But he hasn't done any of these. Other reactions from top Democrats were equally pathetic.

Democrat speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, responded to the news by reading out a poem.

And Michigan congressman, Andy Levin, posted pictures of himself doing yoga.



Activists unfurled a sign in New York

So nobody should be fooled by the Democrats' lies that the critical issue is the 8 November midterm elections.

The Democrats have shown they will stand by as the right tears away abortion rights.

It should be no surprise that a party led by a man who can barely even utter the word "abortion" acts in this way.

The Democrats are fixated on not upsetting sections of voters. That matters more to them than defending women's rights.

FIGURE IT OUT

1 in 4

US women get an abortion in their lifetimes

26

states are likely or certain to ban abortion

1,381

restrictions have been enacted since Roe v Wade in 1973

IN BRIEF

Bin workers of Bexley go to battle

BIN COLLECTORS in Bexley, south London, are striking for two weeks from next Tuesday over pay and conditions.

Bosses at council contractor Countrystyle Recycling want to scrap clauses in contracts and offered a below-inflation pay deal.

Unite union has accused the company of using CCTV to monitor and unfairly target workers.

Making a point out of pay rise strikes

SHEET METAL workers employed by Darchem Engineering on the Hinkley Point contract have secured a pay rise after striking.

The Unite union members struck for two 48 periods last month.

Pay rates were raised for welders, but traders at the nuclear power station were set to receive nothing.

Now the company will pay workers an extra £1.25 an hour—equating to £50 extra a week or 8.5 percent of the basic rate of pay.

Workers will also get two bonuses—£930 this month and £1,000 in September.

Workers wet their whistle with action

WORKERS in a factory that makes beers, including Budweiser, Becks and Stella Artois are set to strike this month.

Over 220 workers at the BBG group's Samlesbury site, who are members of the GMB union, refused to work overtime in May in protest of poor pay.

After negotiations, bosses only offered workers a paltry 3 percent pay rise.

Fight back against cruel boss threats

PUB WORKERS at the St James Tavern in Brighton were furious this week after the pub's landlord told the local MP it would sack all workers engaging in union activity.

Workers at the pub struck two weeks ago over low pay and precarious contracts.

Last Saturday, supporters joined a rally for the pub workers, who are members of the UVW union, outside the pub.

Workers are demanding £11.50 an hour, sick pay and union recognition.

Cleaners mop up better pay with vote

CLEANING workers at Riverside Quarter, a luxury apartment block in Wandsworth, London, have won a 16 percent pay rise.

It follows a strike vote where 100 percent of workers voted yes to action.

They have won a pay rise of £2 an hour and better sick pay.

TRAFFIC WARDENS



TRAFFIC WARDENS have had enough

PICTURE: BEN WINDSOR

Strikers issue 'code red' for parking firm

by BEN WINDSOR

OUTSOURCED traffic wardens in Wandsworth, south London, escalated their strike last week, walking out for five days in a row.

Their action was timed to disrupt the nearby Wimbledon tennis championships.

The GMB members are striking for improvements to pay and conditions. Many wardens spoke about how hard the job had become due to the bosses' short-sighted pursuit of profit.

Wardens are often verbally abused while doing their job, and some have been physically attacked. It's a significant aspect of the job, and the possibility of being met with violence is a constant concern.

One striker said, "This

job is very dangerous. They shout and they hit. They steal our equipment. Before I go home to my estate, I hide my uniform."

Another recounted one of the worst instances. "A few years back there was a funeral with some old soldiers. They had received a parking ticket.

"They saw one of my colleagues and they beat him so badly he ended up in hospital for weeks. But he hadn't even issued their ticket.

"The company had to bring his family from India to visit him in St George's hospital."

More recently, three men cornered a warden. One got him in a headlock, and another slashed him with a knife.

They hadn't even been fined—they just hated traffic wardens. Many of these situations, known as "code

red", are so serious the worker requires hospital treatment. The bosses tell the wardens they are meant to call for help on the radio for a code red.

But in reality, they aren't always able to.

One striker explained, "They give you some shitty equipment.

"A lot of the time, the radios don't work, so people are calling code red, and no one responds."

Another said he had to call code red five times over the last year, and the boss complained about it. So now he tries to resolve those situations alone or call the cops directly.

Many of the workers are black and Asian, and many are migrant workers. It is not uncommon for them to face racist abuse.

TRANSPORT

Eight days of strikes at Stagecoach Merseyside

AROUND 370 bus drivers and engineers at Stagecoach in Merseyside, are set to strike for eight days over pay.

Previous action set to start this week was suspended so workers could ballot on a revised pay offer of 10 percent.

The offer was rejected as it was below the current rate of inflation. The strike

started on Monday and is set to continue at the Gillmoss depot on Friday next week and then 18, 20, 22, 25, 28 and 29 July.

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham said, "Our members are making it abundantly clear that they will not accept being underpaid by this wealthy company any longer."

WEST YORKSHIRE

Bus workers vote on deal

THE 650 Arriva bus workers in West Yorkshire who have been striking indefinitely for almost four weeks have returned to work as they vote on an improved offer.

Unite regional officer Phil Brown said, "Arriva has come forward with an offer which our members will now be balloted on. While the ballot is being undertaken

and as an act of goodwill Unite has suspended its strike action."

The exact details of the new offer isn't publicly known. But the previous offer was an increase of just 4.1 percent.

If the offer is below the rate of inflation workers should reject it—and return to strikes.

RAIL-ROUND-UP

● **STRIKES BY** train drivers in the Aslef union on Greater Anglia trains cancelled 90 percent of services when they walked out for 24 hours last Saturday.

The workers are demanding an above inflation pay rise.

Nigel Gibson, district organiser for Aslef said, "Our members worked during the pandemic, getting people to and from work

and putting their lives and their families lives at risk."

● **TRAIN MANAGERS** on Avanti West Coast train services in the TSSA union have voted overwhelmingly to strike for pay.

The 200 workers voted 86.1 percent to strike on a 66.3 percent turnout.

TSSA is balloting at ten other train operating companies and Network Rail.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

EDUCATION

UCU UNION

UCU ballots are coming

WORKERS in higher education will ballot for industrial action at the end of summer.

The Higher Education Committee (HEC) of the UCU union voted to support action over cuts to the USS pension scheme and over pay, workloads, casualisation and equalities—known as the "four fights".

The ballot will be aggregated for the first time, meaning that votes are counted nationally as a totality.

The HEC also voted to have another ballot in 2023.

If ballots are successful, strikes and marking assessment boycotts will hit universities during marking season.

The HEC decision came after several branch delegate meetings where rank and file workers made it clear they wanted to keep striking and taking action.

● **WORKERS AT** Richmond upon Thames College plan to strike for two weeks after management announced a brutal fire and rehire plot.

Every single teacher has been told they will have to reapply for their job in new roles they will lose their ten days of holidays.

The next wave of strikes is planned to start on 22 August and continue on 24, 25, 26, 30 and 31 of the same month.

The strikes will then run from 1-9 September.

SCHOOLS

Fire and rehire resistance

TEACHERS AND support staff at Drapers' Pyrgo Priory school in Harold Hill, east London returned to picket lines last week.

They are fighting restructuring that would cut hours and pay grades.

The workers in the NEU have announced six additional strike dates after taking sporadic action since May.

They are set to walk out again on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday this week and next week.

NEU district secretary for Havering, John Delaney, said bosses "lack either the will or the expertise to find a solution."

The 12 highest earners in the trust earn between £800,000 and £1 million.

The strike has been solid

Ramp up Coventry action

HGV DRIVERS from Coventry are still striking over the Labour-led council's refusal to change their pay grades.

The workers, who predominantly drive bin lorries, have been out on all-out strike since January.

But a deal still has not been made, and the Unite union risks losing momentum for the long-running strike.

Bringing out other council and bin workers on strike would hit the council hard. And further pressure has to be aimed at

Tom White Waste—a refuse collection company owned by the council that's being used to scab on strikes.

Alongside the reinstatement of deputy conveyor Pete Randle after his suspension from work, strikers are also fighting for all their holiday pay from the period of the strike.

But the longer Unite tries to hold out without ramping up the dispute, such as with more rallies and protests, the less likely there is to be real success.

It's time to escalate.

CARE HOME WORKERS

Carers strike for pay and residents' rights

by YURI PRASAD

ANGRY BRISTOL care workers plan to step up their fight against "fire and rehire" bosses with two 48-hour strikes, starting this Sunday.

And, after three successful 24-hour strikes and a rally, there are signs that the bosses are feeling the pressure.

Unison union members at St Monica Trust charity are furious after bosses demanded sweeping changes to their pay and conditions.

Some workers stand to lose thousands of pounds a year from cuts to enhancements for working unsocial hours.

Paid sick leave is to be halved, handover times reduced and catering and cleaning roles merged.

Bosses have insisted they will fire staff who refuse the changes.

If they succeed in slashing these workers' pay, they will feel able to launch fire and rehire attacks on other staff.

There is also a danger that other care providers could follow.

Carers and relatives speak of a deteriorating quality of



ON THE picket line last week

PICTURE: UNISON SW ON FACEBOOK

care inside the Trust's care homes as many experienced staff have left. A reduced core of often new and inexperienced staff find themselves supervising large numbers of agency workers.

One striking worker told Socialist Worker that inexperienced, young staff had sometimes been required to provide end of life care without debriefing or adequate support, a recipe for trauma. Bosses tried to

head off strikes by stepping up pressure to sign the new contracts. They even sent residents and relatives letters claiming "no colleague will be worse off".

On the eve of the first strike, managers repeatedly rang workers to ask whether they'd be joining the action, something employees are not obliged to disclose.

However, as workers have resisted some cracks have appeared. First, bosses

offered to maintain pay rates for one year if workers signed new contracts.

When it became clear strikes were going ahead they doubled this to two years.

But these concessions do not address workers' grievances.

The "Council" that runs St Monica's Trust—including six members from the infamous Society of Merchant Venturers that has its origins in the slave trade—insists there's a financial need for change.

But the charity's accounts show, "The Trust's financial position at the end of 2020 was strong, with unrestricted reserves of £38.8million and net assets of £305.6million."

They are now spending huge sums on agency workers and hiring security guards to monitor picket lines.

St Monica's strikers have received lots of public support, with several unions, including the RMT, sending speakers to last week's strike rally.

It's crucial this solidarity continues.

Email messages of support to bristol.unison@bristolunison.co.uk

UNION RIGHTS



PROTESTING OUTSIDE the court in Hastings last week

Stand with GMB Three to defend picketing rights

TRADE UNIONISTS have vowed to keep up solidarity with the "GMB Three" after their first day in court last Friday.

The three GMB union officials were arrested on a bin strikers' picket line at the Amberstone depot in Wealden, East Sussex, in May.

Around 50 people protested outside Hastings magistrates court in solidarity with Gary Palmer, Carl Turner and Declan McIntyre. Their case will go to full trial at Brighton Crown Court on 16 November after all three pleaded not guilty on charges of obstruction of a highway.

Palmer said, "We are pleading not guilty. Why would we do anything else? We've not broken any law. And if we have, it's been unfairly imposed on trade unionists."

"We will continue to organise, we will push for workers who need a pay rise to mount industrial action. The fight never stops."

Simon Hester, chair of Hastings and District trades union council, was at the pickets at the time of the arrests. He told Socialist Worker he thought the police had made a "political" decision to arrest trade union activists.

"I asked the police why they were making their arrests on the day, and they said because 'public opinion' had changed. I then asked how they got to

decide where public opinion is—the police officer quickly stopped talking to me after that."

"But what's clear is this attack on these trade unionists is an attack on pickets and the right to strike."

It's vital everyone defends the right to strike and picket as the cost of living crisis deepens. Justin Bowden, GMB regional secretary, said, "The background to this court case is really simple. It was about ordinary people facing a cost of living crisis unprecedented in my working life."

"They were standing up against an employer and trying to get better pay to support their families."

"A lot of these people were being paid under £10 an hour for walking 15 to 20 miles a day. They made a democratic decision and they struck."

The bin workers have since returned to work after accepting a new pay deal from outsourcer Biffa.

The GMB Three case is a chilling example of how the Tories have emboldened the police to clamp down on working class people taking a stand. Socialists, trade unionists and campaigners should show their support for the GMB Three.

● Tweet solidarity to @janerinsussex and @GMBSussexBranch

LGBT+

Pride says LGBT+ rights must not be taken away

FIFTY YEARS since the first Pride march in London in 1972, hundreds of thousands of people marched to celebrate and continue the fight for LGBT+ liberation last Saturday.

London Pride started as a protest, organised by the Gay Liberation Front three years after the Stonewall Riots in New York in 1969.

It has changed a lot since then, with corporations and banks dominating.

Many trade unions were also present. Aslef union member Helen told Socialist Worker, "I came out in 1998 which was very difficult. Pride is important because it shows younger people that we are visible."

Eve from west London told Socialist Worker, "Today is a big party where we can feel comfortable,

but we remember that Stonewall was a riot against police brutality. LGBT+ people still experience awful issues, like bullying in schools or being attacked."

"A massive group of LGBT+ people in London shows we do exist, we are part of society and we will make ourselves heard."

Angel from Surrey told Socialist Worker, "We must continue to normalise LGBT+ culture and stop stigma around coming out. Trans women are women and they must be allowed in women's spaces."

Lucy from north London agreed, adding, "We need more organisation to fight for change. Pride gives us the space to build."

● Full report online at bit.ly/SWonPride
Sam Ord

JOURNALISTS

Journalists go beyond words

THE NUJ union has said it will ballot journalists for strikes over pay at newspapers owned by Reach.

Bosses at Reach offered an increase of just 3 percent or £750 minimum to all its workers. NUJ members at Reach voted to reject the offer. It means there could be action at Reach's local newspapers and websites, and the Daily Express newspaper.

But journalists at the Reach-owned Daily Mirror, who are members of the British Association of Journalists, voted to accept the offer.

■ JOURNALISTS AT the Scotsman, Scotland on Sunday and the Edinburgh Evening Post newspapers have voted to ballot for strikes over redundancies.

Members of the NUJ union voted for action by 90 percent on a 75 percent turnout.

POST OFFICE

New strikes in post office

POST OFFICE workers are set to strike on two days next week—the latest actions in a battle over pay.

Workers at 114 Crown Post offices—the large, state-owned branches—are set to strike on Monday of next week, followed by logistics and admin workers on Thursday.

The two days of action are the latest in a battle against a pay increase of 3 percent—a massive real terms pay cut.

Workers previously struck in June and May this year.

But so far they have taken only one or two days of action, followed by weeks of talks, where bosses have only budged by half a percent—up from their previous offer of 2.5 percent.

Longer, more sustained action—especially by logistics and admin workers who distribute cash and valuables to every Post Office—can break the deadlock.

CONSTRUCTION

There should have been fight over builders' pay

SOME HALF a million workers got a pay cut last week.

Construction Industry Joint Council (CIJC) agreed to a 5 percent pay increase last week with Unite and the GMB union. But that is less than half the rate of inflation.

The CIJC represents a large number of building and civil engineering groups, and governs the pay and conditions of about 500,000 workers. It is responsible for setting pay rates.

Both Unite and the GMB unions had initially asked for 10 percent.

At that point Unite general

secretary Sharon Graham said, "This pay claim reflects the urgent need to restore this workforce's pay to at least a level that matches inflation, and we will not accept anything less."

She added, "The union will be taking radical measures to ensure that construction workers secure a fair pay rise."

In May, protesters gathered outside a CIJC meeting after receiving what it called a "derisory" pay offer from the council, understood to be less than four percent.

The agreed pay cut comes into effect on 25 July.

RISE UP TO DEMAND ABORTION RIGHTS

by ISABEL RINGROSE

A TEN-YEAR-OLD in the US who was six weeks pregnant after being raped was forced to travel hundreds of miles to a different state to access abortion services.

The girl, who lives in Ohio, was not able to get an abortion anywhere in her state after it enacted a “trigger ban” following the overturn of Roe v Wade last month.

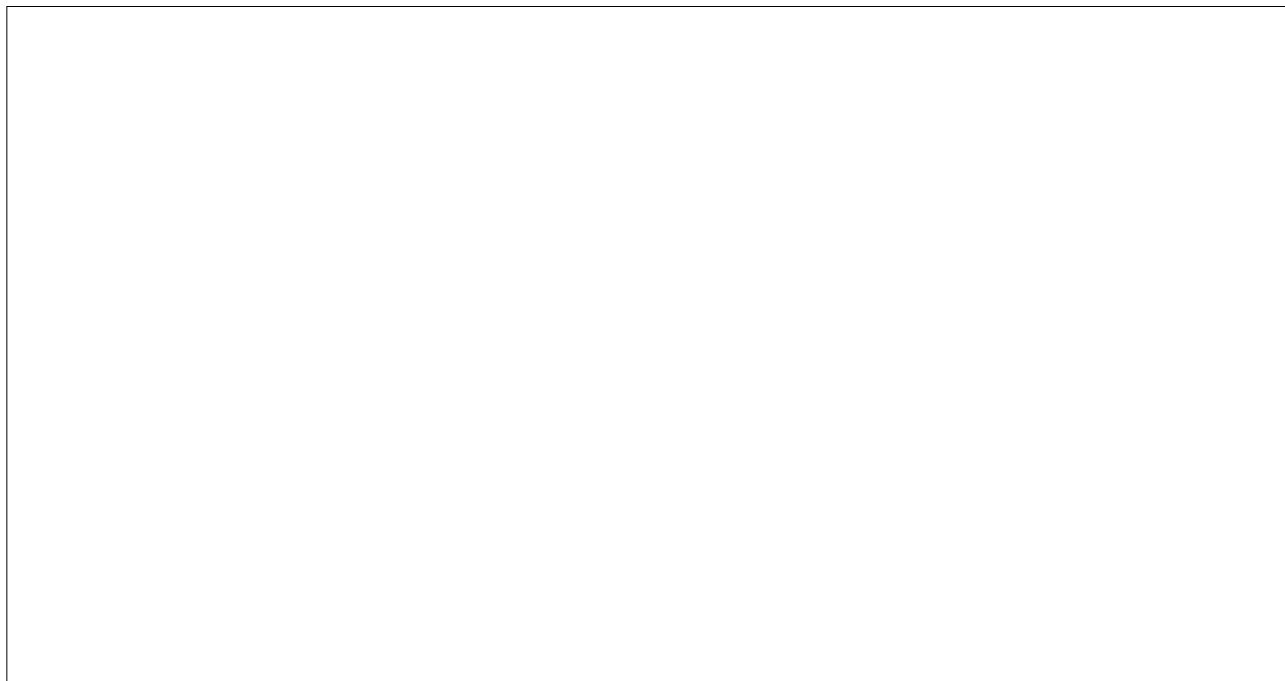
The sickening story shows the horrifying reality of trying to seek an abortion in the US.

Clinics have had to close in the 13 states that banned abortion as soon as the ruling was made.

And it’s set to get worse. Indian was the state where she eventually had an abortion. It is yet to ban or restrict abortion but is expected to do so in the coming weeks

That means more traumatised children and women will have to travel further for abortions or be forced to have children they don’t want.

Abortion providers in states surrounding those with bans are already receiving a sharp increase in patients



ABORTION RIGHTS protest in New York last month

coming for help. And some are helping to pay for the travel costs.

States such as South Dakota include cases of rape and incest in their abortion bans.

South Dakota also banned abortions via telemedicine—where those in need can talk to a health professional and

order abortion pills online or by phone.

And the state upped the punishment for unlicensed abortions.

Republican governor Kristi Noem described the case of pregnant child rape victims seeking an abortion as “tragic”. But added she

would not “a tragic situation perpetuate another tragedy”.

The shockwaves of the Supreme Court decision have hit as far as Britain. Women in England and Wales who have suffered miscarriages or stillbirths are being investigated by police on suspicion of illegal abortion.

Abortion is only legal up to 24 weeks when two doctors agree it would mentally or physically harm the woman.

Anything outside this constitutes an offence.

Cops investigated a 15 year old for a year in 2021 after she had a stillbirth. Her text messages and search history

were examined. Activists fear a ramping up of these kinds of investigations in the wake of the US rollback.

Abortion Rights UK has called a solidarity march this Saturday. The protest will start in London’s Trafalgar Square and finish at the US Embassy in Nine Elms.

Vice-chair of Abortion Rights UK, Judith Orr, told Socialist Worker, “We’re calling on everyone who’s full of rage after the Roe v Wade decision to march with us and show solidarity with everyone fighting back for women’s rights in the US.

“But we also have to fight so that there are no rollbacks here. We need to demand decriminalisation of abortion. So join the march, bring your banners and get your trade unions involved.”

The march is coordinated with action across the US as part of a day of action to defend abortion rights.

An international movement to protect and demand abortion is crucial to hit back at the bigots attempting to control women’s bodies.

Abortion Rights UK march, Saturday 9 July, meet 4pm at Trafalgar Square in central London

Join Trans+ Pride protest in London and hit back at wave of transphobia

TRANS RIGHTS activists were set to take to the streets of central London this weekend to hit back at the Tories’ and the right’s vicious clampdowns.

On Saturday Trans+ Pride will march for the fourth year under the slogan, “Pride is a protest”.

Attacks on abortion rights are opening the door to a wider assault on sexuality in the US and elsewhere.

That why the fight for trans rights must continue to be radical and loud.

Trans+ Pride is a focus for everyone who wants Pride to be a resistance event, not a



Trans pride protest in London in 2021

chance for corporations to claim to be inclusive.

The radical protest saw over 10,000 march through central London last year to call for changes, including reform of the Gender Recognition Act.

Attacks on trans people have been ramped up over the last year. And conversion therapy for trans people still hasn’t been banned.

Divisions

The Tories and their supporters continue to attempt to drive a wedge between women’s and trans rights to stoke up divisions.

This week the Tories announced new legislation that will insist new public buildings have separate single-sex toilets.

Schools, hospitals, offices and entertainment venues will be blocked from having just gender-neutral facilities.

This is so “women feel safe and comfortable”.

But the Tories don’t care about the safety of women—they just want a scapegoat and to create lies about the risks trans people pose.

It’s the Tories who cut funding to women’s services and defend the institutionally sexist Met police that

women have died at the hands of. Trans+ Pride brings together LGBT+ people who want to fight for liberation.

It’s not enough to be simply out on the streets partying—a fightback has to be launched at the rising attacks.

Last year a large contingent from the NEU education union joined the march with their banners.

More of this working class unity is needed this year to continue the radical legacy of pride.

London Trans+ Pride Saturday 9 July, meet at Wellington Arch in central London at 1pm to march to Soho Square

Ordinary people welcomed and took part in supporting the 40,000 rail strikers who walked out of work for three days last month.

For socialists, workers' action and the withdrawal of their labour is a crucial way to fight back. Not only does it hit the bosses' profits, it also raises questions of broader political change in society.

Revolutionary Polish-German socialist Rosa Luxemburg argued that mass strikes were the fusion of both economic and political demands. She used this to explain how struggle was the vehicle to radically transform society.

Luxemburg developed her ideas in her 1906 pamphlet *The Mass Strike, the Political Party and Trade Unions*.

She did this to tackle debate in the German Social Democrat Party over the nature of revolution.

It contained importation lessons from the 1905 revolution in Russia, which sparked large strikes in Germany and saw workers' action increase confidence to raise political demands.

Luxemburg explained how capitalism brought state and economic power much closer together. The capitalist class dominates the working class politically using the state, and economically through exploitation.

So workers' economic struggle—for instance fighting for higher wages—can develop into a political struggle about who runs society. “The economic struggle is the transmitter from one political centre to another,” she wrote.

“The political struggle is the periodic fertilisation of soil for the economic struggle.”

During economic fights workers learn about the power of organisation. Here they can gain a wider political consciousness.

Economic demands can become political at both higher and lower levels of struggle, whether it's hundreds of thousands or just a handful of workers striking. This is why revolutionaries argue for longer, bigger strikes.

Luxemburg added that it works both ways—political struggle can also lead to economic demands.

“Every new onset and every fresh victory of the political struggle is transformed into a powerful impetus for the economic struggle,” she said. “Extending at the same time its external possibilities and intensifying the inner urge of the workers to better their position and their desire to struggle.”

“After every foaming wave



STRIKES, LIKE the RMT union rail action, show the power workers have

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

MASS STRIKES

WHY DO THEY MATTER?

Rosa Luxemburg's theory of mass strikes creates a pathway to revolution. Sam Ord asks what workers building the fightback today can learn from this



Rosa Luxemburg

of political action a fructifying deposit remains behind from which a thousand stalks of economic struggle shoot forth. “And conversely. The workers' condition of ceaseless economic struggle with the capitalists keeps their fighting energy alive in every political interval.”

The ruling class are scared by this prospect. That's why they say economic issues facing society, such as rising inflation, have no political cause and are merely a phenomenon.

Even trade union leaders say that their power to call workers

“During economic fights workers learn about the power of organisation”

to down tools shouldn't be used for political reasons. And Keir Starmer's Labour Party is opposed to supporting strikes.

Luxemburg analysed this “two pillar” approach when German coal miners went on strike in the Ruhr in 1889. The strike spread across industries—ignoring trade union leaders' direction—to those who weren't in a trade union.

The workers demanded improved conditions, then soon added that the government upheld workers' rights. But union leaders were desperate to

regain control of the workers.

And the main workers' party—the SPD—branded the strike as purely economic, so not their concern.

Luxemburg's analysis was rooted in 1905 Russia, when worker's economic and political demands sparked a revolution. Under the ruling Russian monarchy life was brutal with peasants and workers alike suffered terrible living and working conditions.

Tsar Nicholas II ran a repressive, undemocratic and racist rule. So in January 1905 an unarmed march for civil rights headed to the Winter Palace in the capital Petrograd to present a petition for improved working conditions.

The Imperial Guard shot down protesters in what was known as Bloody Sunday. In protest workers withdrew their labour in a general strike across the city.

This bred a period of other strikes, mutinies and uprisings across Russia, Ukraine, Poland and the Baltics. The striking workers demanded economic and political change.

Workers confronted the Tsar's state and fought for their right to protest. Other workers were then inspired to battle to improve their own wages and working conditions.

In October a general strike forced the hand of the Tsar when he promised political reform.

Luxemburg said class consciousness awoke “as if by an electric shock”. “The proletarian mass quite suddenly and sharply came to realise how intolerable was that social and economic existence which they had patiently endured for decades in the chains of capitalism.”

“Thereupon there began a spontaneous general shaking of the tugging at these chains.”

The experience transformed revolutionaries' understanding of how a modern working class revolution could take place. As Luxemburg wrote, “The mass strike is the first natural, impulsive form of every great revolutionary struggle of the proletariat”.

She described general strikes as “the living pulse-beat of the revolution and at the same time its most powerful driving wheel”.

They are a driving force towards revolution, transforming ideas among workers and giving them confidence for more fights.

That's why struggle, Luxemburg argued, is the best educator for the masses. She wrote, “Absolutism in Russia must be overthrown by the proletariat.”

“But in order to be able to overthrow it, the proletariat

requires a high degree of political education, of class-consciousness and organisation.” To achieve that can only be done “by the living political school, by the fight and in the fight, in the continuous course of the revolution”.

But mass strikes will reach limits under capitalism. That's why they have to be taken further, to a revolution that can smash the state and make the economic and political demands a reality.

The prospect of revolution and general strikes can seem unrealistic for a majority of workers fighting small-scale battles in one workplace. Yet even the smallest strikes build confidence and ideas among workers to win.

Oppressive ideas such as racism and sexism can fall apart on picket lines, and workers are able to envision a different version of society with them at the helm. But Luxemburg underestimated the lengths the trade union bureaucracy would go to break a mass strike. She wrote that mass political and economic struggles wouldn't pause to “ask the union leaders whether they had given their blessing”.

She added, “If they stood aside from the movement or opposed it, the result of such behaviour would be only this—the union or party leaders would be swept away.”

LEADER OF the RMT union Mick Lynch has boiled the rail strikes down to demanding no compulsory redundancies. Although their fight is not on the scale of a general strike, workers view their action as a confrontation with high prices and low wages.

Strikes on a mass scale can paralyse the state, but they are not always enough to sweep away the influence of unions and reformist parties. This can be seen in the general strike in Britain in 1926 that was sold out by the union officials, scared of losing control of the workers.

This also led Luxemburg to also underestimate the need for a revolutionary party. The revolutionary party is a force that is able to break the bureaucrats' control and guide the self-activity of workers.

But Luxemburg made clear that workers are central to achieving their own emancipation. She stressed that liberation would not be simply

The 1905 Russian revolution was the inspiration for Luxemburg's pamphlet on mass strikes.(top) General strikes, like in Britain in 1926, aren't always enough to smash the state(above)

handed by rulers or through a series of reforms.

Workers themselves must fight for it. In the fight for self-emancipation, strikes are the working class's most potent weapon.

They are able to combine economic damage to the ruling class with political demands on a mass scale, which can escalate to lose a much better society.

As Luxemburg explained, “Socialism will not and cannot be created by decrees, nor can it be established by any government, however socialistic. Socialism must be created by the masses, must be made by every worker.”

“Where the chains of capitalism are forged, there must they be broken.”

Working class people today in Britain endure rising inflation, low wages and poor working conditions.

Luxemburg's work is a reminder to all workers the power to change those conditions, as well as the society that causes them, lies within the working class collectively.

READ MORE

● **Reform or Revolution and The Mass Strike** by Rosa Luxemburg £14.99

● **A Rebel's Guide to Rosa Luxemburg** by Sally Campbell £3

● **Rosa Luxemburg** by Tony Cliff £8
Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



FOCUS ON PALESTINE

Israeli government collapse rooted in state foundations

Nick Clark looks at how successive administrations are crumbling with the logic of occupation

ISRAEL'S government has collapsed. The occupation of Palestine—and the very existence of the Israeli state itself—are at the heart of the crisis.

Right wing prime minister Naftali Bennett was forced to dissolve his government on Wednesday of last week. He failed in his attempt to renew a law that extends Israeli civilian rule to its citizens in West Bank settlements.

The law was a cornerstone of Israel's apartheid system as it privileges Israeli settlers over West Bank Palestinians, who live under military rule.

Every Israeli government—and most Israeli parties—have voted to renew it every five years since Israel invaded and occupied the West Bank in 1967.

But Bennett's government narrowly lost the renewal vote on its first reading in June—and looked set to lose a further vote on Friday of last week. That would have left more than 475,000 Israelis in West Bank settlements living under the same military law as Palestinians.

Rather than risk that, Bennett chose instead to dissolve the government.

Opposition

For most Israeli politicians, this had nothing to do with opposition to settlements. The bill would have passed if it wasn't for the viciously right wing opposition led by former prime minister, racist warmonger Benjamin Netanyahu.

As prime minister, Netanyahu championed settlements in the West Bank. He didn't want to end them—but to prove that Bennett's government can't manage the occupation.

That's a fundamental question that strikes at the very existence of the Israeli state—and is at the root of Israel's political crisis.

Israel's settlement building

NAFTALI BENNETT (centre) has run into trouble

BACK STORY

Palestinian oppression is woven into the history of Israel

● Israel was founded by settlers from Europe that stole Palestinian land

● They dreamed of an exclusively Jewish state

● So they forced Palestinians out of their homes

● Over 70 years of violence has followed, accompanied by more land grabs

campaign is designed to claim Palestinian land—with a view to eventually annexing it.

But annexing Palestinian land also means more Palestinians living inside Israel's border. The prospect of this is an existential crisis for a state premised on maintaining a clear ethnic majority over Arabs.

Bennett's coalition replaced Netanyahu's government a year ago this month.

It ended a two-year stalemate in which four elections had failed to produce a government.

“Last year's Palestinian revolt has rocked Israeli society”

The one thing that every party in Bennett's coalition agreed on, is that Netanyahu could no longer manage the occupation. He is bogged down in multiple corruption scandals. But—more importantly—last year's Palestinian revolt had rocked Israeli society.

Commitment

Yet those parties were also split on how to manage the occupation and preserve Israel as a “Jewish” state.

Some of them are so-called “centrist” or “left” parties that think a commitment to some sort of Palestinian state is the best way to keep Arabs out of Israel.

Others—such as Bennett—want to annex the whole of the West Bank. They were also divided on what Israel's “Jewish identity” should mean.

Some are secular and want to end privileges enjoyed by Israel's orthodox minority, while others are deeply religious.

That left Bennett's coalition fragile and vulnerable to splits—and Israel's political system mired in repeated elections and stalemates. The only near certainty is that any outcome will likely mean intensified repression of Palestinians.

Israeli mainstream politics once denied the crisis had anything to do with the occupation.

But now the truth is coming to the fore—it's about a racist state that can't exist without oppressing Palestinians.